

**Judith Zaffirini**

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**From:** Harold Cook <hc@haroldcook.com>  
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**To:** Harold Cook  
**Subject:** DEM CAUCUS: SAEN, "Dewhurst trying to work out a voter ID deal"  
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Members and staff, a note on this piece on voter ID from the Express-News –

Senate Democrats will be reminded that the voter I.D. bill from last session, as it came over from the house, did have a provision exempting seniors from the bill. Of course in the typical bait-and-switch method of legislative strategy common to legislative leadership these days, the exemption was merely stripped out in the Senate committee substitute.

The senior exemption failed to fool any of the House Democrats – they voted against the bill with the senior exemption included. The reason is simple: the Texans discriminated against in the legislation are not limited by age.

#### **Dewhurst trying to work out a deal to get voter ID bill passed**

By Clay Robison - Express-News

AUSTIN — If at first you don't succeed, try sweetening the deal.

"Sweet" probably isn't the right word here, given the bitter fight in the Senate over the unsuccessful Republican effort to pass a voter identification bill two years ago. But a compromise is being discussed.

The measure, which would have required voters to produce some type of photo ID before being allowed to cast ballots, won easy approval in the House. But Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst was unable to muster the two-thirds vote necessary to move the bill through the Senate, thanks to a solid bloc of 11 Democratic votes against it.

The U.S. Supreme Court since has upheld the constitutionality of a voter ID law in Indiana. But the opposition in the Texas Senate would seem stronger than ever, since there will be at least 12 Democratic senators during the upcoming session — 13 if Chris Bell wins a Houston-area runoff on Tuesday.

Dewhurst plans to try again and already has been talking to several Democratic senators about making a deal. One thing he is offering is an exemption for senior citizens from the ID requirement or, at least, exempting seniors from having to pay a fee for their IDs.

Several details, including the cutoff age, apparently have yet to be worked out. The bill approved by the House in 2007 would have exempted voters 80 and older from the ID requirement, but that provision was stripped out by the Senate State Affairs Committee.

Sen. Mario Gallegos of Houston, who joined his Democratic colleagues in killing the ID bill two years ago despite a difficult recovery from a liver transplant, said Dewhurst has approached him about reviving the senior exemption provision.

Gallegos said he is willing to talk some more but isn't ready to drop his opposition to the bill, particularly because he hasn't seen the proposal in writing.

"The seniors' provision is a good idea, but I have concerns that the bill would still discriminate against other people," he said, including immigrants who recently have become citizens.

In other words, there still are strong partisan differences over the bill.

Republicans say photo IDs would guard against voter fraud. Democrats argue that Republicans are trying to intimidate minority voters who are more likely to support Democratic candidates.

This controversy will rage a while longer.

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